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27 December 1984

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MEMORANDUM FOR:[REDACTED]  
Chief, Systems Integration Division, MISG/ODP

FROM:

[REDACTED]  
Director of Data Processing

SUBJECT:

Comments on the PMCD Secretarial Study (1984)

1. This memorandum is in response to your request for comments on the PMCD Secretarial Study (1984) dated 17 December 1984. Careful review of the document reveals that a considerable amount of time has been invested in studying the secretarial issue from 1957 to date with little, if any, significant change in the status quo. Action is in order.

2. The issue does not primarily seem to be one of pay scale per se, but rather one of caste. There is the perception by Agency secretaries that their work is largely unappreciated and seldom given recognition. Tying the grade of the secretary to the grade of the boss appears to have created the problem by reinforcing the premise that the individual secretary has no independent worth. It seems reasonable to treat the retention of such linked grades as a floor and not a ceiling. Secretarial positions should be audited in the future in the same manner that any other employee's or manager's positions are reviewed. Factors pertinent to documenting their contributions include the knowledge required for the job, the supervisory controls and guidelines, complexity, and the scope and effect of their work as well as the types of personal contacts and purpose of the contacts. Physical demands and the nature of their work environment are also important. "Thin PMCD resources" as discussed in Option 4 are not an acceptable excuse for continuing outmoded assumptions, which result in maintenance of negative stereotypes.

3. While pay may not be the heart of the matter, consideration should be given to improvements in this area. Application of the concept of banding (as used in the Office of

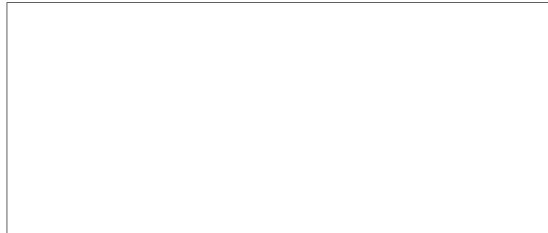
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Communications) for the pay ranges associated with the GS 7-11 levels would be a constructive step. It would serve to encourage more creativity and permit distinctions to be made based on the individual's work contributions.

4. Creating a secretarial career service does not seem desirable although it may receive some current support by some secretaries for many positive reasons. It seems sounder to have a broadly defined career service (e.g., MZ Careerists) in which individuals are encouraged to reach their own highest potential wherever that might be in the organization. Providing a broad base from which to select promotes greater flexibility in making career transitions based on demonstrated talent, motivation, and work contributions.

5. If I can be of further help on this matter, please contact me.



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